

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
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2009

HOUSE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL 2008

A CONCURRENT MEMORIAL

URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PROVIDE FUNDING RESOURCES AND TO DESIGNATE THE FORMER BENNETT FREEZE REGION AND SURROUNDING AREA OF COCONINO COUNTY AS AN ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AREA.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 To the Congress of the United States of America:

2 Your memorialist respectfully represents:

3 Whereas, many people are unaware of the plight of the Navajo people,
4 particularly those in communities located in Coconino County of northern
5 Arizona, who are impacted as a result of the former Bennett Freeze and Public
6 Law 93-531, the Navajo and Hopi Indian Land Settlement Act, as amended, which
7 was signed into law on December 22, 1974; and

8 Whereas, as a result of Public Law 93-531 and the imposition of the
9 Bennett Freeze, the Navajo Nation and the region has suffered and continues
10 to experience the adverse impacts in terms of health care, economic
11 development, basic community services, agriculture, education, housing and
12 infrastructure; and

13 Whereas, as a result of restrictions on development of public
14 facilities, the people have no nursing or elderly care facilities in any of
15 the local communities. Treatment programs for psychiatric in-patient care is
16 nonexistent in the region, and trauma services are also not available in any
17 of the medical service areas covering the region. Jobs and economic growth
18 have suffered in the impacted communities, and the unemployment rate is
19 nearly 50%. Over the past forty years, the working population has moved to
20 nearby cities or larger metropolitan areas where there are more economic
21 opportunities. The school drop out rates have continued to remain high in
22 comparison to non-Indian communities. Social services provided by the Navajo
23 Nation carry immensely high caseloads, reflecting the high unemployment and
24 high numbers of low-skill base population in the region; and

25 Whereas, despite the prevalence of adverse social and economic
26 conditions, positive elements of success have been demonstrated by entities
27 such as the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation by means of employing
28 the "Indian Self-determination provisions" of Public Law 93-638.

29 Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of
30 Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

31 1. That the United States Congress provide funding resources and
32 support for the communities in these areas that have been particularly
33 impacted by limited federal resources.

34 2. That the United States Congress provide additional funding
35 resources and support for Public Law 93-638 entities, such as the Tuba City
36 Regional Health Care Corporation, by increasing funding and support for
37 Public Law 93-638 tribal organizations and programs.

38 3. That the United States Congress designate the former Bennett Freeze
39 region and surrounding area of Coconino County as an economically depressed
40 area deserving of Economic Empowerment Zone designation.

41 4. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies
42 of this Memorial to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of
43 the United States House of Representatives and each Member of Congress from
44 the State of Arizona.